

# A Residency-Based Program in Medical Informatics

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## INTRODUCTION

The need for informatics instruction has been emphasized by a number of authors and formal instruction in medical informatics has been mandated by the Residency Review Committee for Internal Medicine (1). In 1994 the Department of Medicine decided that a greater emphasis should be placed on the providing informatics instruction to residents. A formal program was instituted in July of 1995 based on the curriculum developed by Carter (2).

### Program Design

Each PGY-I resident participates in a Block Month rotation of which one day per week is devoted to medical informatics. Residents rotate through the program in groups of four and a maximum of three sessions are usually attended by each resident. In addition, a series of lectures on special topics in informatics are presented as part of the General Internal Medicine Conference Series.

### Instructional Format and Materials

Instruction is provided in two formats: small group learning and independent study. A brief presentation is required of each resident at the end of the rotation. A detailed syllabus is provided which contains, suggested readings, tutorial materials, and a copy of the formal curriculum. The textbook for the course is Computers in Clinical Practice, published by the American College of Physicians. Computer Workstations (Power Macintosh) are provided which contain a standard software set (Table 2). To facilitate communications between the housestaff, each resident is provided password-protected e-mail and free internet access. Table 1 contains a listing of topics covered during the rotation.

Table 1. Topics Covered During Rotation

<i>Small Group</i>
Bibliographic Retrieval
Critical Review of the Literature
Biostatistics and Clinical Epidemiology
<i>Independent Study</i>
Presentation Graphics
Word Processing
On-line Communications
CD-ROM Full-text retrieval
Diagnostic Expert Systems
Drug Information and Management

Table 2. Standard Software

NetScape
Ovid
QMR
AskRx
PowerPoint
SAM-CD
Wordperfect

## DISCUSSION

Workstations are now available in the resident's clinic and on the medical ward of the University Hospital. We hope to report on the residents' reactions to the rotation, utilization of workstations, software selection, and curriculum changes. Course materials and the revised curriculum will be available for those who wish to view them.

### References

1. Essentials of Accredited Residencies. 1995-1996 Directory of Graduate Medical Education Programs. American Medical Association. 1995
2. Carter JH. A Residency-Base Curriculum in Medical Informatics: Design and Implementation Issues, 1992